Rare Book

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RARE BOOK DEPARTMENT
1934-35

With the completion of South Hall as the new home of the University Library, former library quarters in the Low Memorial Library were made available for the Rare Book Department and other special collections. The following report covers the assignment of space for the purposes of the Rare Book Department, an account of general activities, and recommendations.

THE MOVING of the Rare Book Department from the former quarters on the fifth floor of Schermerhorn Hall was completed towards the end of September, and by the beginning of the Winter Session the Department was in satisfactory working order.

THE SELIGMAN LIBRARY has been placed in Room 210, where the books are arranged on the ground floor and mezzanine around the walls, and in some of the alcoves in the middle of the room. All of the books at Dr. Seligman's house and in his office have been brought to the Library. They are being listed and shelved as quickly as possible.

Dr. Seligman has added many new books to the library this year - perhaps the rarest, a set of the Nouvelles Éphémérides économiques. He seems quite satisfied with the provision made for the library in the Low Memorial Library and the way in which the books are being cared for.

The reference work done in the library has been quite interesting.

DAVID EUGENE SMITH MATHEMATICAL LIBRARY has been placed in Room 209. While this arrangement is not altogether satisfactory at the present moment, it does allow the safeguarding and convenient use of the collection until architectural changes in the building will make it possible to put the volumes in their final place. Work on this collection is covered

by the following report submitted by Miss Bertha M. Frick, in charge of the library:

Moving and rearrangement of this collection and page and desk duty for the Rare Book Department combined to leave little time for cataloging as the following figures show:

Cataloging Statistics

September 1, 1934 - May 31, 1935

Titles	4
Volumes	13
Analytics	209
Volumes of pamphlets	14

However, a good deal of reference work of varied types was accomplished and some bibliographic work. The Department now has a complete checklist of all of Dr. Smith's historical, critical, and pedogogical writings. While it is manifestly impossible to have a complete file of the writings themselves, due to the fact that a considerable number is contained in periodicals, yet the library is building up a collection of the books which Dr. Smith wrote, alone or in collaboration, including those that he edited or translated. The library still lacks some of the early textbooks, but by another year it is hoped that these will be obtained.

This department had charge of the arrangement of material on exhibit for the Firdausi celebration, November 9-21,1934. A small exhibit of Dr. Smith's life and work was also arranged in celebration of his seventy-fifth birthday, January 21, 1934.

It is to be earnestly hoped that another year will see the provision of adequate page assistance in the Rare Book Department, so that there may be more uninterrupted time for cataloging.

THE DALE COLLECTION OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES has also been placed in Room 209 on the upper tier of the stacks.

THE EPSTEAN COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND PHOTOMECHANICAL PROCESSES has also been placed on the stacks of Room 209. The main accessions to this library are specially bound typewritten copies of Mr. Epstean's translations of the following works on the discovery of photography:

History of the Discovery of Photography, by Georges Potonnier. Paris, 1925.

The Truth Concerning the Invention of Photography - Nicephon Niepce, His Life, His Endeavors, His Works from His Correspondence and Other Unpublished Documents, by Victor Fouque, Paris, 1867.

Otherwise, there was little opportunity to work with the books. Since a good many of the volumes are important reference books in the book arts and industries, the classification, cataloging, and binding of at least the most important items will be one of the major tasks of the coming year.

BOOK ARTS AND INDUSTRIES LIBRARY. Both the specimen and the reference books of this collection were placed on the open-shelf alcoves in Room 210, where their easy accessibility and attractive arrangement have done much to encourage and facilitate their use. From this experience it is to be hoped that similar arrangements of at least the reference section will be possible in the future.

Use of the Library. Use of the books in their new quarters was instaneous, the new accessibility of the books probably contributing much to a considerable increase in the regular reading attendance.

In addition to this, specific research problems were pursued with the aid of the library. Dr. Stern's article on "Writing" in the Encyclopoedia of Social Science was the result of study in this library.

There was also frequent occasion to give bibliographic assistance to members of the faculty and to students. As in former years, members of the English faculty have sent over groups of students for short demonstrations of the most interesting books in these collections.

In addition to the regular uses of the books on the campus, a group of books was sent to the Newark Public Library for an exhibition "Faust in Legend and Music" which was held on January 16-17, 1935.

Purchases. This was, for obvious reasons, not a particularly active year. There was only a small allowance, which, however, did serve to keep up the general reference books and a few specimens of moderate price. The main task of the year was the establishment of the Department in new quarters and the holding of a representative inaugural exhibition.

Gifts. Through the good offices of the Writers' Club of the University, the Columbia Library has been given the famous copy of James Joyce's "Ulysses," which figured in the court proceedings to permit its publication in this country. Mr. Bennett Cerf, of Random House, presented the volume to the Library, and it was received by Dr. Lehmann-Haupt at a dinner given by the Writers' Club on May 1, 1935 at the Men's Faculty Club.

A very welcome present, given by the Book Study Club of Columbia, was Mr. Richard Floethe's original illustration and layout dummy for his "Ulenspiegel," which won first prize in the Limited Editions Club's international competition.

One of the most interesting presents to the Rare Book Department this year was a miniature papermaking mold brought back from Japan especially for this collection by Mr. Howard Clayton of the Japan Paper Company.

Mr. Douglas McMurtrie continued to send his frequent contributions to the printing history of America.

Several interesting designer's dummies of American books of importance, such as the American edition of James Joyce's "Ulysses," and Gertrude Stein's "Portrait and Prayers," were given by Ernest Reichl of the H. Wolff Estate Bindery.

Mr. Kalbfleisch continued his well-selected additions of fine volumes in exquisite state of preservation.

The Broadside Collection , which is being built up to supplement the book arts and industries collection, is now kept in Dr. Lehmann-Haupt's office in Room 202, Low Memorial Library. During the past academic year the collection has been considerably enlarged by the addition of several interesting donations, among them:

A full set of the book jackets done in Germany and the United States by Georg Salter.

An extensive collection of the output of the Marchbanks Press, given by Miss Emily E. Connor in memory of Mr. Hal Marchbanks.

A group of marbled papers by Douglas Cockerell, showing the successive stages of the process of marbling.

A group of photographs of bindings, among them a number of photographs of the bindings shown in the Bookbinding Exhibition.

Portrait photographs of persons identified with the field of graphic arts. (We started sending printed requests early last year, and the photographs have been coming in all during the summer and winter.) already this collection is quite extensive, and it would seem from its present success that the idea is well worth carrying out.

These materials, with the collection of advertising broadsides, posters, book jackets, examples of printing processes, and other graphic arts materials which were already available, make a valuable archive for the use of students and instructors in the bookmaking courses. All of these

small groups are constantly being augmented, and the size of the collection will soon outstrip the space provided in the horizontal cases now owned by the Department. To keep the collection in good condition, additional cases should be purchased to house the new material as it arrives. Miss Mosher, who has been in charge of the broadside collection, recommends that the present facilities be enlarged as necessity arises and opportunity presents itself.

The patterned papers are under the care of Mr. Charles M. Adams, formerly of the staff of the University Library, now at the New York Public Library. Notable additions to the collections of old and modern patterned papers this year are: A group of modern printed Czechoslovakian patterned papers, bought at Prag; a small group of modern German marbled papers, bought at the Leipzig Fair in 1934. Also a large number of woodblocks for the printing of patterned papers and textiles, which came from a Tyrolese mountain workshop, were purchased from an Innsbruck second-hand dealer.

Transfer. The most important acquisition through transfer was the taking over of the finely printed and illustrated volumes and the book arts and industries reference books from the Phoenix Collection, which are to be housed as Phoenix Rare Books in the Low Memorial Library. The rest of the collection has been taken over to South Hall. This step, completed by the beginning of July, brought the addition of valuable and useful material to the Department, and, through the removal of the collection from the galleries, greatly facilitated the somewhat complicated task of adequate reader service.

Cataloging. Apart from the cataloging of the Smith collection books already noted, 265 new books (272 v.) were cataloged. This total includes the volumes cataloged by Mr. Kramer, which are mentioned below. Also 251 volumes (310 v.) were recataloged, and 311 (372 v.) were reclassified this year in the Rare Book Department. From the Phoenix Collection 350 volumes were added.

No cataloging was done during September and October, 1934, when the library was moved, and later on increase in the number of readers, added desk duty, administration of both vault books and of the Phoenix Collection and information service for all library collections in the building have left comparatively little time for uninterrupted cataloging.

Care and Repair. Steady progress in this field has been reported every year. This year, two important innovations were possible. Through the collaboration of Mr. Erb, Mr. Talan of the firm of Dess and Talan, and the Curator of the Rare Book Department, the general appearance of our general library bindings has been considerably improved. Thus, instead of using special styles for all its books, the Rare Book Department has been able to bind a good many of its volumes in the regular "improved" library style. The special dummies have continued to be useful for better kinds of books, and, fortunately, have been used increasingly by other departments for their better binding jobs. As in former years, some especially difficult jobs had to be given to outside binders, but towards the end of the year a promising development has begun, which, it is expected, will do much to improve the general binding facilities of the University. Miss Marianna Von Dobeneck has been assigned for an afternoon each week to work on special hand binding problems on rare books. She is using equipment

very generously purchased by the bindery for the use of the new bookbinding course.

New Bookmaking Courses. With the additional room facilities in the Low Memorial Library, the Rare Book Department has had the opportunity to recommend and successfully inaugurate two new practical courses in bookmaking: One of them, The Art of Hand Bookbinding, is taught by Mr. and Mrs, Gerhard Gerlach - both of whom studied at the Leipzig State Academy of Graphic Arts. The other new course, Book Design and Production, is taught by Mr. Robert Josephy, who has been engaged in book production since 1920 and was the first freelance designer to specialize in the field of "trade" books.

Assignment of Rooms in the West Wing. Room for the new bookbinding course was found in Room 105, formerly the bindery of the Library, where Mr. Hering has established his newspaper preservation workshop. He has been a most helpful friend and collaborator in many technical tasks that have come up during the year - particularly in starting the bookbinding class and in arranging the Exhibition of Modern Bookbindings mentioned below.

Mr. Josephy's course was given in Room 102. This room has been attractively redecorated early in the fall and equipped with glass-door bookcases. The room, serving as it does, has already proved its usefulness. It is used as a classroom for the History of Bookmaking courses, as well as for Mr. Robert Josephy's course in Book Designing.

Room 102 has also been the meeting room for several of the meetings of the Book Study Club during the last year.

Also with its projection facilities, Dr. David Efron of the

Anthropology Department, has been able to take and store motion picture films which are used in connection with the study which he is making of racial gestures.

Early in July the collection of fine printing specimens was moved from Room 210 into this room.

The Executive Offices of the Department were put in the space formerly occupied by the offices of the Director and Librarian and their secretaries. The partitions, for which there was no more need, were taken out of Room 201, which is now the office of the Curator. The room also serves for the storing of the broadside collection, the bookmaking lantern slides of the School of Library Service, and similar bookmaking material. Room 202 has been kept for the use of the secretary of the Department. Rooms 203-4 were temporarily equipped for the housing of the Exhibition of Modern Bookbinding, and it has been possible to secure indefinite use of the display and lighting facilities, so that the room is useful, for the time being, as an exhibition room. Room 205 was used, prior to the redecoration of Room 102, as a classroom. Since the adaptation of Room 102 for that purpose, is has been used for storage only.

The Vault has been taken over by the Rare Book Department and is at present being administered in close cooperation with the Loan Desk at South Hall. One of the important tasks of the immediate future will be the making of a record for all books in the vault for the departmental catalogue.

STAFF

Page Service. When the Rare Book Department moved into Low Library, there was no regular page service, either for the department or the building.

The members of the staff spent most of their time in duties ordinarily assigned to pages, and at that, with a staff of four, it was physically impossible at times to cover the situation. We did have the help of FERA boys, which was valuable, but uncertain. The distance from South Hall and the necessity of getting books back and forth; the fact that the Rare Book Department administered both the vault books - across the building and one flight down, and the Phoenix and Johnson Collections - three flights up and no elevator, finally made page service imperative. In February we secured a half-time page. It was his duty to make one trip to South Hall every day for all the department libraries in this building. On July 1, 1935, we secured another half-time page, who also serves all the department libraries in the building. It is obvious that the present arrangement for the coming year is more adequate, and that it will be better possible to take care of lunch hours, get books at any time from any part of the building, and have someone always on duty in the center desk in Room 210 - a necessity with open shelves and an increased number of readers. It will also be possible to have a more organized relation between the department libraries in this building and between Low Memorial Library and South Hall.

Department Secretary. On October 1, 1934, Miss Annabel Mosher, formerly editorial secretary of the Home Study Department of the University, took over the newly created position of secretary to the Curator of the Rare Book Department. This position includes not only the regular secretarial duties, routine of correspondence, and so forth, but also serving as information center for the various libraries and other activities in the building. Miss Mosher has speedily taken hold of her new responsibilities and has proved to be an efficient, reliable, and sympathetic assistant.

Apart from the duties described, Miss Mosher has taken charge of the broadside collection described above, and deserves a special word of thanks for her efficient cooperation in the accessioning and redistribution of the material sent for the International Exhibition of Bookbindings.

Mr. Kramer will be leaving us in the middle of the coming year to study in the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago. Arrangements for his successor have not yet been completed. In the past year Mr. Kramer's status has changed somewhat. Early in the year, with the absence of adequate page service, a large share of these duties fell to him. Later on when adequate provision was made, he was able to attend his more advanced duties, such as answering reference questions, aiding in bibliographic research, and so forth. He has also begun to do some cataloging of books in the printing specimen collection. In the two months that he was able to give time to this work 51 new books in 56 volumes were cataloged, and 24 books in 26 volumes were recataloged by him.

The Curator of the Department wishes to put on record his sincere appreciation of the very loyal and unstinting cooperation of all members of his staff in preparing the International Exhibition of Bookbindings. Also the active advice and interest of the Librarian of the University and of Mr. Frank C. Erb and the members of his staff, and, last but not least, of Miss Dollie B. Hepburn are gratefully acknowledged.

BOOKBINDING EXHIBITION. Plans for this exhibition were laid when in May, 1934, Mr. Coykendall invited a number of leading librarians and book collectors to a dinner party to discuss plans. As a result of this discussion it was decided to arrange what promised to be an exceptionally interesting and important exhibition of contemporary hand binding. No such exhibition

had been held in New York City since the early days of this century. President Butler nominated the following committee to take charge of the plans for the event:

Mr. Frederick Coykendall, Chairman
Trustee and Director of Columbia University Press
New York City

Miss Belle da Costa Greene
Director of the Pierpont Morgan Library
29-33 East 36 Street
New York City

Miss Ruth Granniss
Librarian of the Grolier Club
47 East 60 Street
New York City

Mr. Henry W. Kent
Secretary of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York City

Professor Vladimir Simkhovitch
Professor of Economic History
Columbia University

Mr. Roger Howson
Librarian of the University
Columbia University

Mr. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt
Curator of the Rare Book Department
Columbia University

Mr. Philip Hofer
Assistant Director of the Pierpont Morgan Library
29-33 East 36 Street
New York City

Mr. Harry M. Lydenberg
Director of the New York Public Library
New York City

Mr. Cortlandt Field Bishop
Lenox, Massachusetts

Mr. Lucius Wilmerding
12 East 89 Street
New York City

Mr. Grenville Kane
50 Church Street
New York City

Mr. William B. Osgood Field
655 Fifth Avenue
New York City

An Executive Committee was established under the chairmanship of Mr. Frederick Coykendall, and Mr. Henry W. Kent and Mr. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt were named as members.

During the preliminary discussions the following tentative program was laid out: To assemble a representative showing of modern bindings from the various European countries since the revival of the arts of the book around 1890; to precede this modern survey with a condensed and carefully selected survey of historical bindings, this collection to be assembled as a background for the modern showing and to offer comparisons of the conservative and the new elements in contemporary fine bindings. The historical collection to be assembled from material in private and public collections existing on Manhattan Island,and thus to serve as an introduction to the existing resources in the field of historical bindings.

As a first step in following out the committee's suggestions, preliminary arrangements with leading authorities in various European countries were made by Dr. Lehmann-Haupt during a four months' leave of absence in the summer of 1934.

With few exceptions the contacts made abroad and through correspondence were brought to successful completion, and the printed catalogue of the exhibition contains final information on the countries that participated in the exhibition, their representatives, and the names and addresses of all binders whose work was shown.

The historical section was assembled from the Grolier Club, the Spencer Collection of the New York Public Library, and the private

libraries of Mr. Lucius Wilmerding and Mr. Philip Hofer.

In view of the value of the bindings and the fact that they were likely to suffer from prolonged exposure in exhibition cases, every care was taken to protect and safeguard the exhibits. The staff of the Rare Book Department was responsible for the guarding during the day and on the afternoons of Sundays and holidays; a special night watchman was on hand from 6 p.m., to 9 a.m., on weekdays and in the mornings of Sundays and holidays.

No direct light was turned on the books, shades were permanently drawn in the room, and special lighting fixtures installed for the occasion. Also the humidity in the cases was carefully kept at an equal level.

As a further measure of safety and protection the Committee decided upon a showing of only three weeks. However, every attempt was made to inform the public about the exhibition and to provide for a number of evening meetings for graphic arts societies and schools.

The exhibition opened on April 15, 1935 at 9 p.m., with a reception of the President and Trustees of Columbia University to invited guests. The President presided and introduced Mr. Henry W. Kent, Secretary of the Metropolitan Museum, who spoke on behalf of the Committee, and in turn introduced Mr. Karl Kup, newly appointed Curator of the Spencer Collection of the Public Library, who gave the address of the evening.

During the three weeks the following special groups visited the exhibition:

April 18 - The American Institute of Graphic Arts regular monthly meeting was held at Columbia University. Mr. Frederick G. Melcher, editor of Publishers' Weekly, spoke on "The Significance of Fine Bindings in the World of Books." Mr. Monroe Wheeler, publisher and bibliophile, spoke on "The Relation of Modern Bookbinding to that of Other Epochs."

April 26 - In the forenoon Professor Shaver and approximately 100 students of the School of Library Service visited the exhibition.

In the evening the New York Regional Catalogue Group, which held a meeting at South Hall, came over to see the bindings.

April 30 - Instructors and students of the Brooklyn Friends School.

May 1 - Instructors and students of the Lincoln High School.

May 2 - 2 to 6 p.m., a group of professors, librarians, and students from New York University.

At 8:30 p.m., the President and members of the New York Printing Teachers Guild, the faculty and students of the New York School of Printing and of the New York School for Printers' Apprentices.

May 3 - Mr. Forrest Grant, in charge of art instruction in the New York City schools, and art teachers of New York City.

May 6 - In the evening, to mark the closing night of the exhibition, the Book Study Club of Columbia University and the New York Library Club.

The total number of visitors, including evening groups, was between 1,800 and 2,000.

To preserve a permanent record of the exhibition a small moving picture was taken; photographs and slides have been made of thirty outstanding bindings, and a very few of the bindings were purchased by the Columbia University Library for the Rare Book Department.

It is believed that the exhibition successfully accomplished its undertaking to show the outstanding developments in hand bookbinding during the last thirty years and to compare this work with the best historical examples that could be gathered from New York City collections.

EXTRAMURAL ACTIVITIES

Book Study Club. Another important activity of the Rare Book Department to extend its interest beyond the immediate University community and to keep the interest of former students and friends is the Book Study Club, which has now completed an active fourth-year program. Monthly meetings during the year were devoted to the following events:

MEMBERS' NIGHT, Monday, November 5, 1934, at 8 o'clock. A pre-housewarming of the new quarters of the Rare Book Department.

GROLIER CLUB, Monday, December 3, 1934, at 8 o'clock. Members were the guests of the Grolier Club and were given the privilege of visiting the library of the Club.

JANUARY MEETING, Monday, January 7, 1935, at 8 o'clock. Miss Millicent Sowerby, bibliographer to the Rosenbach Company spoke on "Twenty Years' Experience in the Rare Book Trade."

PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY, Monday, February 4, 1935. Mr. Philip Hofer was host to Book Study Club members and their friends, and showed them the current exhibition on Color in Printing.

MARCH MEETING, Monday, March 4, 1935, at 8 o'clock. Mr. Georg Salter, noted German jacket artist, and Mr. Ernest Reichl, book designer and binding expert, conducted a discussion of book jackets.

APRIL MEETING, Monday, April 8, 1935, at 8 o'clock. The members were the guests of Mr. George A. Plimpton at his home, 61 Park Avenue. Mr. Plimpton showed his unique collection of manuscripts and printed books illustrating the history of education and the development of text books.

MAY MEETING, Monday May 6, 1935, at 7 p.m. Members joined the members of the New York Library Club in a visit to the Exhibition of Modern Bookbinding in the Low Memorial Library.

Lectures. Lectures outside of the regular instruction were given by the Curator of the Department on the following occasions:

Twenty-Second Annual Conference of Eastern College Librarians, Columbia University, Saturday, December 1, 1934. Subject: Improving the Appearance of Library Bindings.

Washington Square College, New York University. Meeting of the N.Y.U. Book Club on Wednesday, February 27, 1935. Subject: Bookbinding.

Graduation Exercises, The New York School of Printing, High School Department. Wednesday, June 12, 1935. Subject: Making a Hobby of Your Job.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS. The housing of the Rare Book Department in its new quarters is not completed. The present arrangements are necessarily makeshift, but have reached a satisfactory stage and will allow an efficient conducting of the departmental activities for some time to come.

Future planning in the building and the final reconstruction and redecorating of the building are being considered by a committee called into action for this purpose by the President of the University, and of which the Curator of the Department is a member.

It is gratifying to know that the function of the Department has been fully understood and recognized by this committee as far as the equipment and housing are concerned. However, it should be emphasized at this point that there is a distinct lack of appropriate funds for even the normal development of the Department. In the past valuable opportunities for purchasing interesting material had to be passed by, and more than once volumes that were kept for some time on approval, with a hope of finding a way to purchase them, had to be returned to their owners. A list of desiderata, comprising some out of print reference books in the $10 to $50 category, was published in No. II of Bibliotheca Columbiana, and has failed to produce evan a single contribution. At the present moment there are a number of volumes, amounting to a purchasing price of about $500, which are on the active desiderata list of the Department with no prospect of purchase. A small annual appropriation of $300 is sufficient to keep up the book arts and industries reference library, and from time to time printing specimens in the lower price catagory have been purchased from other library funds. However, the fact remains that the purchasing of the Department is distinctly inadequate.

$1,000 a year would be a satisfactory appropriation for many years to come. Such a sum would enable us not only to take care of the current accessions in the reference section and the low-priced specimens, it would also make possible the purchase of a few interesting manuscripts and early printed books, without which this Department cannot be said to be fulfilling its proper function.

DAVID EUGENE SMITH MATHEMATICAL LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT July 1, 1935

Moving and rearrangement of this collection and page and desk duty for the Rare Book Department combined leave little time for cataloging as the following report shows:

Cataloging Statistics

September 1, 1934 - May 31, 1935

Titles	4
Volumes	13
Analytics	209
Volumes of pamphlets	14

However, a good deal of reference work of varied types was accomplished and some bibliographic work. The Department now has a complete checklist of all of Dr. Smith's historical, critical, and pedogogical writings. While it is manifestly impossible to have a complete file of the writings themselves, due to the fact that a considerable number is contained in periodicals, yet the library is building up a collection of the books which Dr. Smith wrote, alone or in collaboration, including those that he edited or translated. The library still lacks some of the early textbooks, but by another year it is hoped that these will be obtained.

This Department had charge of the arrangement of material on exhibit for the Firdausi celebration, November 9-21, 1934. A small exhibit of Dr. Smith's life and work was also arranged in celebration of his seventy-fifth birthday, January 21, 1934.

It is to be earnestly hoped that another year will see the provision of adequate page assistance in the Rare Book Department, so that there may be more uninterrupted time for cataloging.

Bertha Frick